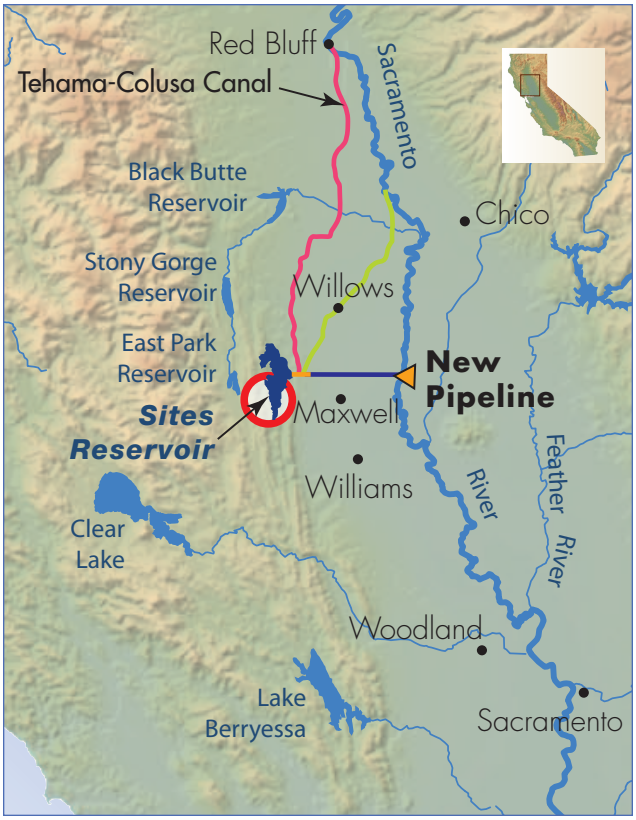
Sites Reservoir Project

September 2007 | Department of Water Resources

New surface storage in California will improve water supply and greatly needed flexibility resulting in broad public, environmental and operational benefits. With the additional capacity and integrated operation of California's water delivery system, water diversion and deliveries can be timed in ways that improve water quality, restore wildlife habitat, support fishery needs, facilitate conjunctive management and increase flood protection.

BROAD PUBLIC BENEFITS:

- Provide 140,000 to 240,000 acre-feet average annual environmental water supply to benefit fisheries and for other environmentally beneficial uses.
- Improve fish passage in the Sacramento River by replacing the Red Bluff Diversion Dam with state-of-the-art fish screens and pumps.
- Increase cold water carryover storage at Shasta Lake to provide cooler river water for anadromous fish.
- Help stabilize fall flows in the upper Sacramento River between Keswick Dam and Red Bluff to avoid flow fluctuations and adverse conditions for spawning fall-run Chinook salmon.
- Enhance flood protection by re-operating existing reservoirs. For example, water stored in Lake Oroville can be shifted to Sites Reservoir in the fall and leave more space in Lake Oroville to capture floodwaters and reduce peak flows.
- Respond to climate change impacts by capturing and storing increased winter flows caused by changes in timing and amount of runoff and more precipitation falling as rain rather than snow.
- Help mitigate the effects of sea level rise associated with climate change by releasing additional water to repel salinity intrusion in the Delta.
- Reduce water diversions on the Sacramento River during critical fish migration periods.
- Increase water supply reliability and Sacramento Valley water management flexibility.



Proposed Sites Reservoir

Sites Reservoir can improve water supply reliability for environmental, municipal, industrial and agricultural uses, while contributing to flood protection and providing water for a number of sustainable Sacramento River ecosystem restoration actions and improving Delta water quality. As an offstream storage facility, the project would have less adverse environmental effects than onstream storage due to relatively fewer impacts to riverine habitat.

Sites Reservoir Project

September 2007 | Department of Water Resources

Key Points:

- Sites Reservoir has been determined to be among the best locations for surface storage due to its location and size, and would provide great benefits to water supply, water quality, ecosystem restoration and flood management from a state and local perspective.
- DWR studies indicate that Sites Reservoir will provide significant benefits under any likely long-term Delta conveyance option that provides a stable Delta export capability, whether using existing conveyance or enlarged conveyance.
- The estimated total average annual yield of Sites Reservoir ranges from 470,000 to 640,000 acre-feet per year. These yields include water supply benefits for urban, agricultural and environmental uses, water quality and ecosystem restoration actions.

Project Status:

NEPA/CEQA process is underway to identify potential environmental impacts and mitigation measures. The draft and final EIS/EIR is anticipated to be completed in spring 2008 and end of 2008, respectively. After appropriation of state and federal funds, there will be a two-year design phase followed by a five to seven year construction phase, for a total of seven to nine years. Current planning schedule would have Sites Reservoir operating by 2019.

Sites Reservoir Rendering